

Peyton Greco

Elizabeth Bleicher

Fear of Failure: The Importance of Resilience, Grit, and Confidence

Many student athletes fear failure and this prevents them from performing their best. Failure exists on different levels, including failing others, failing oneself, failing to achieve perfection, or settling for mediocre performances. Fear should propel athletes into future success, but as it is in today's society, fear inhibits performances and successes because athletes lack the proper coping mechanisms. Student athletes must learn the importance of resilience, grit, and confidence. These three attributes prepare athletes for future performances, giving them the tools they need to become fearless players, focusing on what they can control, rather than fearing what they cannot. To address the problem that failure is creating among student athletes today, this project describes a program for coaches to help their players understand the importance of having a growth mindset. In effect, athletes would, over time, realize that resilience, grit, and confidence are learned skills, not inborn traits. With this plan, student athletes would be able to think past their fears and change their relationship with failure. The proposed program would run for three weeks with each week focusing on one of the three qualities listed above. Not only would this program help athletes overcome their fear of failure, but it would also help them reach their goals and highest potentials. With these qualities, athletes could also develop their mental toughness, a tool that could be used during competitions and during high pressure situations. Exposing athletes to these skills has the potential to propel them to greatness and that is something that every student athlete should have the opportunity to experience.